

Guidelines for Developing Successful Educator Mentoring Programs

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Mentoring is an essential component of the preparation and induction of new educators, and of the continuum of professional preparation, development, and leadership. Research shows that when done well, mentoring improves new teacher and thereby student performance, reduces educator turnover, and improves school climate.

These guidelines are intended to assist supervisory unions, school districts, and other entities in the design of effective mentoring programs for new educators. The components are organized in order of priority when initiating a mentoring program.

Mentoring

Mentoring is a structured program that pairs a mentor with an educator who is either new to the profession or new to the school, in order to provide training, orientation, assistance and support.

Mentors are experienced educators who have demonstrated high quality instructional practice and who are trained in mentoring to provide consistent individual guidance and support.

Components of Successful Mentoring Programs

Effective mentoring programs for new educators include the following five components:

1. A Structured Process That Is Focused On A Model of Practice Designed to Improve Student Learning

A Research-Based Model or Definition of Effective Practice: Effective mentoring programs are based upon a specific model or definition of effective educational practice that informs the objectives and substance of both the mentoring program and the supervision and evaluation system within the school and district. The model or definition is thoroughly understood by the mentors and drives the content and structure of mentoring activities.

Program and Individual Goals: Mentoring programs include both program and individual goals. Program goals specify the desired outcomes of the mentoring program at the school and/or district level and identify the means of evaluating the effectiveness of the program in relation to those goals. Program goals must be communicated to all members of the school community. Individual goals are developed by the new teacher in collaboration with their mentors, within the framework of the model or definition of effective practice, the *5 Standards for Vermont Educators*, and the school or district's Action Plan.